

*Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009*

**Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of Japan  
in New York City**

*September 23, 2009*

*President Obama.* Hello, everybody.

*Audience member.* Good morning, sir.

*President Obama.* Good morning. Well, let me just make a very brief statement.

I want to welcome the new Prime Minister of Japan, Prime Minister Hatoyama. I want to congratulate him for running an extraordinary campaign and his party leading dramatic change in Japan. We've had a very good preliminary discussion about the critical importance of the U.S.-Japanese alliance. It has been a cornerstone of the security of both nations as well as the economic prosperity of both nations for almost 50 years now.

And we pledged that we wanted to strengthen and deepen that relationship. As the world's two largest economies, we recognize the importance of coordinating closely to continue to move beyond the current economic crisis and to focus our attention on how our economies are actually providing opportunity for ordinary citizens. And we also pledged to coordinate very closely together on a range of international threats: everything from nuclear proliferation, the situation in North Korea, how we can help to stabilize Afghanistan and Pakistan, and how we address transnational issues like climate change.

So I've been very impressed with the knowledge and determination of Prime Minister Hatoyama. I know how it feels to have just been elected and form a Government and suddenly you have to appear at a range of international summits; I went through this 9 months ago. But I'm very confident that not only will the Prime Minister succeed in his efforts and his campaign commitments, but that this will give us an opportunity to strengthen and renew a U.S.-Japan alliance that will be as strong in the 21st century as it was in the latter half of the 20th century.

*Prime Minister Hatoyama.* Well, President Obama has talked all thing—everything about our meeting, so I have nothing to add to what Mr. President has said. But I told during the meeting to Mr. President that I came across the Pacific Ocean to express my gratitude for President Obama and the American people for the American people to exert courage to select President Obama. And that sentiment came across the Pacific Ocean to Japan, which brought about the change of government in Japan. And I expressed my gratitude for the change and that the American people have—[*inaudible*—to the Japanese people.

And I told President Obama that the Japan-U.S. alliance will continue to be the central pillar—key pillar of the security of Japan and Japanese foreign policy. And I expressed my ideas of our contributions to the issue of Afghanistan and Pakistan, and my ideas on the issue of North Korea. And we will proceed in dealing with these issues in a cooperative manner.

And on other global issues, like global environment and nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, I highly approve of President Obama's leadership in courageously—[*inaudible*—nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. As the only country that suffered nuclear attacks, we will work together with the United States toward a world without nuclear weapons. And on the issue of climate change I made a speech yesterday, and on this issue, too,

we would like to work closely together with the United States. And I confirmed these ideas with President Obama.

*President Obama.* Thank you so much. Welcome to the United States——

*Prime Minister Hatoyama.* [Inaudible].

*President Obama.* ——and I look forward to visiting with you again.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. Prime Minister Hatoyama spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

*Categories:* Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Japan, Prime Minister Hatoyama.

*Locations:* New York, NY.

*Names:* Hatoyama, Yukio.

*Subjects:* Arms and munitions : Nuclear weapons and material :: Nonproliferation efforts; Commerce, international : Global financial markets :: Stabilization efforts; Commerce, international : Global financial markets :: Unrest; Economy, national : Strengthening efforts; Environment : Climate change; Japan : Afghanistan, role in; Japan : Pakistan, role in; Japan : Prime Minister; Japan : Relations with U.S.; New York : President's visits; North Korea : Nuclear weapons development.

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